

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicants add new claims 15 and 16 and amend claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 12 and 14. No new matter is added.

Claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-2, 4-6, 8 and 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hamada (EP 0 850 673). Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, “input criteria display means for displaying input criteria, wherein when the priority input device information acquired by the priority input device information acquisition means indicates that a character input device is selected, a character input criteria is displayed as the input criteria and when the priority input device information acquired by the priority input device information acquisition means indicates that a speech input device is selected, the character input criteria is displayed as the input criteria when a predetermined characteristics of the character input criteria is not provided, and a speech input criteria is displayed as the input criteria corresponding to the character input criteria in regard to the predetermined characteristics of character input criteria when the predetermined characteristics of the character input criteria is provided”.

The Examiner asserts that Hamada discloses “one may call to an animal by either ‘Here boy!’ or ‘Hereboy! NOW!’ as an alternative. While it is not explicitly disclosed that these options are displayed on the screen, Hamada has already been discussed regarding displaying options to the player on the screen, and thus would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at

the time the invention was made to display the input criteria that changes depending on the input device, as it is a matter of obvious design choice that yields the predictable result showing users the possible selections for a game” (page 3, last paragraph of the Office Action).

Applicants submit that Hamada does not disclose displaying the input criteria that changes depending on the input device for at least the following reasons. Hamada discloses that when a player wants to befriend an animal he calls out something nice, when the animal the player wishes to befriend is looking at the player’s character. Once the animal becomes player’s companion, if the player walks somewhere, the animal will follow afterwards, but if it sees something interesting it will stop and try to go off in that direction. In this case, the animal can be brought back by calling out “Hereboy!NOW!” or the like (page 12, lines 35-42). However, Hamada does not disclose or suggest displaying input criteria **based on the input device**.

Specifically, the call “Hereboy!” and “Hereboy!Now!” are based on what the animal in the game is doing and is **not based on input device**. For example, if the animal is looking at the player’s character, the “Hereboy!” call is used and if the animal becomes interested with something and stop or tries to go off in that direction then the “Hereboy!Now!” command can be called. Therefore, Applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to display input criteria based on the input device.

Furthermore, Hamada does not disclose that the character input criteria and the speech input criteria are different as recited in claim 1.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claim 1 is allowable over the cited reference.

Claim 2, 5, 6 and 12

Applicants submit that claims 2, 5, 6 and 12 recite subject matter analogous to claim 1, and therefore are allowable for at least analogous reasons claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 4 and 10

Claims 4 and 10 depend from one of the independent claims that are allowable, and therefore claims 4 and 10 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Claims 7, 9, 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hamada in view of Tananka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,544,123). Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claim 7

Claim 7 recites, *inter alia*, “means for displaying input criteria of which at least one of the input criteria is different between when the priority input device information indicates that a character input device is selected and when the priority input device information indicates that a speech input device is selected.” The Examiner concedes that Hamada does not disclose displaying input criteria when a character input device is selected and a speech input device is selected. The Examiner relies on Tanaka to teach the features missing in Hamada. Applicants disagree with the Examiner for at least the following reasons.

Tanaka is directed a game apparatus in which icons are displayed on the screen and the player selects the icon so as to input correlating commands (column 1, lines 10-17). In the portion of the reference relied on by the Examiner, Tanaka merely discloses that the symbols on the icons represent the commands appropriated thereto. For example, command “A” is appropriated to icon 171, command “B” for icon “172 and so on. However, there is no

disclosure of the input criteria being different between when character input device is selected and when speech input device is selected. In particular, Tanaka discloses the symbols on the icons correspond to the commands; it does not disclose different input criteria corresponding to the input device type (i.e., character input or speech input).

Furthermore, the Examiner asserts that “one skilled in the art would be able to take the multiple levels of commands presented by Hamada ... and display them on the screen as symbols on icons representing options available to the player. When a speech input device is not connected to Hamada, the player can only control the game with the controller, and thus, only those input criteria would be displayed as symbols on icons. When the speech device is connected, Hamada has several additional options for controlling character as discussed, and thus those options would be displayed as symbols on icons” (page 6, last paragraph of the Office Action). Applicants disagree with the Examiner for at least the following reasons.

Applicants submit that there is no disclosure or suggestion that the combination as asserted by the Examiner would disclose that at least one input criteria displayed on the screen would be different based on the input device. Specifically, as acknowledged by the Examiner, Hamada does not disclose that different input criteria being displayed based on the selection of character input device or speech input device. Moreover, Tanaka merely discloses that symbols are used on icons to represent commands. Therefore, since both Hamada and Tanaka do not disclose anything about **displaying input criteria of which at least one of the input criteria is different between when a character input device is selected and when a speech input device is selected**, it is improper for the Examiner allege that the combination discloses these features.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claim 7 is allowable over the cited reference.

Claims 9 and 13

Claims 9 and 13 recite subject matter analogous to claim 7, and therefore are allowable at least for the similar reasons claim 7 is allowable.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hamada in view of Volk et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,673,401). Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claim 3

Applicants submit that since claim depend from claim 1 and since Volk does not cure the deficiency noted above with respect to claim 1, claim 3 is allowable over the cited reference.

Claim 14

Applicants note that the Examiner has not rejected claim 14, and therefore Applicants assumes that claim 14 is allowable and herewith has rewritten claim 14 into independent form. As such, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of claim 14.

New claims

Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 7, and therefore are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency. Also, the cited references do not disclose the features recited in the newly added claim.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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